

## OBSERVATIONS

### ON THE RELIGION OF CHRISTIANITY

#### What I Believe and Why I Believe It



CHAS. H. SCHWARTZ.

(By Chas. H. Schwartz).

"Will you do something for me? Some night when it is dark and the sky is full of stars, will you stand with uncovered head and let the god of your youth whisper to you in the sighing of the night wind? I believe some of your early faith will be restored. I know you don't like to hear of these things, but I can't help mentioning them, and I know you will be honest with yourself and your god."

The above is an extract from the letter of a friend of my childhood days. For her benefit, and others of my Christian friends and relatives, who are good hearted and well meaning persons, I am writing this article. I will endeavor to make my views on religion generally, and Christianity in particular, so plain that there will never more be any question in regard to my belief.

My religion is to love my fellow-man, to hate tyranny, hypocrisy, prevarication and superstition. To do all the good I can here and now. To help the unfortunate by word and deed and not shirk my share of the toil and grief that falls to the lot of mortal man.

I believe that nature is the common mother of us all. We know not whence we came nor whither we go. We have no proof or assurance of a life beyond the grave. We should do the best we can here and now, the future will care for itself.

Early in life I was a good Sunday school boy. I was brought up in the nurture and admonition of a Campbellite god. In spite of this excellent (?) early training I began to doubt at the age of fourteen, when an impious uncle placed in my hands a copy of the "Age of Reason." It was the first Freethought book I had ever seen and I became an ardent infidel while reading it. That book was the means, through its conversion of myself, of making unbelievers of my parents and brothers with one exception. Not one has even gone back into the fold in the twenty-five years that have passed since the Age of Reason first came into our home.

The uncle who thus led us to the fountain of truth, a few years later passed into the great beyond, having been mangled in a cotton gin in the sunny Southland. If there be a hereafter he be none the worse off for his beliefs in this world, for he was true to his friends and ideals and frank and unhypocritical in his unbelief or infidelity. If there be no hereafter, he is just as well off as any Christian, however devout and pious he or she may have been.

I do not know that he ever harmed any one in this world, though he did sometimes among the "Unco guid" by his persistence in hunting and fishing on the Sabbath, and his funny stories adopted from the Bible. He had a way of making folks laugh when he told the story of the flood; Sodom and Gomorrah, Joseph and

Old Mrs. Potiphar, Abram and Sarah his wife, who was fair to look upon, and Abimelek, King of Gerar. Folks didn't wear long faces, jump up and down and howl for mercy when he talked religion.

All this impressed me wonderfully. I wasn't long in discovering that Freethought was a religion of good cheer and happiness, of Liberty, Truth and Love.

I saw that the old brands of orthodoxy I had been taught from childhood had a tendency to narrow one's mind, and to create envy, dissension and strife.

The Campbellite said one must be "soused clean under" in baptism; the Dunkard, "souse 'em thrice, face foremost;" the Methodist, "baptize 'em any old way, so you get 'em into the church;" the Catholics insisted on sprinkling with holy water, whatever that is, at five dollars an ounce and the priest take the money.

I wasn't long in discovering that every pious son of Adam had a different route to heaven, and insisted that his road was the smoothest, straightest, best and in many instances the only true road to everlasting life. That the average priest (any religious teacher) would lie and cheat, swindle and blackmail everyone who dared to dispute the truth of his wonderful (?) and elastic scheme of salvation. The more I read of Christianity, the surer I was that these were the only tactics possible, for the church was built upon the sands of superstition and falsehood and was doomed to fall despite the efforts of the priesthood to save the world for Christ.

I found that what was known to the civilized world as Christianity was simply a man made religion like all others—a special creation of man himself to hold in subjection his weaker brother man.

I have found that policy Christianity is the favorite brand with all those who have "an ax to grind," as it were; that most Christians are such for revenue only, and not from sincere and honest motive.

I believe that no greater set of hypocrites, liars and general A1 grand rascals ever disgraced a Christian nation than many of our public servants, regardless of creed, cult or craft. For fifty years they have in true orthodox fashion legislated the wealth of the land into the hands of a favorite few and left the many miserable, poor and unfortunate brethren to poverty, sorrow and starvation, that Dives might put fifty thousand dollar doors on million dollar churches in which to worship a god who was born under mysterious circumstances in a sheep stable.

Little towns all over the land are supporting three or four ministers, feeding them on the "fatted calf" and yaller chicken, clothing them in fine raiment, and educating their impudent progeny, while the children of the poor are clothed in rags, grow up in ignorance and die in poverty and despair.

Such is Christianity. Such is the Christian conception of a god; that he wills all just as it is on earth today.

I have no respect for such a god, but I love my brother man. Man is a reality, but the god of Christianity is a myth, an imposition, an outrage and reflection on the intelligence of every one who believes in such a monster.

Since Eve loved the "gentlemanly serpent, not wisely but too well," the world has been cursed by too much god, and since that time woman has been a slave to both god and man.

St. Paul, whoever he was, the alleged founder of militant Christianity, issued the edict: "Woman learn in silence and subjection from your husbands." Aye, even god himself pronounced his curse upon woman. "And

thy desire shall be unto thy husband and he shall rule over thee." This curse was pronounced upon Eve because she dared to investigate the science of Eugenics, and could tell a man when she saw one. It is but natural Eve should prefer the society of the intelligent and fearless Mr. Satan to that of the ignorant and stupid landscape ganderer, Old Man Adam.

One consolation is left woman. Eve was the brains of the family. Adam hadn't sense enough to come out of the rain. In spite of the alleged inferiority of woman, she has a decided advantage and monopoly of goodness over man. I believe woman is generally good, not because of her subjection to man, but in spite of it. Man can thank his sister, woman, for what little virtue and goodness there is in the great he-world.

The clergy have passed the choice saying of St. Paul down the centuries and today we find woman listening in "silence and subjection" to hypocritical sky-pilots while the world is plunging deeper and deeper into misery and pious rascality.

I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception, in sorrow shalt thou bring forth children, saith the Lord God unto woman. I am accused of blasphemy for entertaining certain views in regard to the "cause of all things," or God if you please, but what manner of man must he have been who makes his god curse woman in her noblest function, that of motherhood.

I do not believe God ever conversed with Eve or any one else on any subject whatever. There is no such God. I believe those stories were made and circulated by the priesthood to cause the ignorant masses to fear what they were taught to believe was a God. The fear of the unknown was ever fostered by the priesthood of every nation as an effective means of governing the illiterate masses.

The Jews were the only people who were ever on speaking terms with God. When the Roman Catholics made the acquaintance of the holy family Jehovah retired from active service and the pope has been managing for him admirably ever since.

I have the principal writings of all the great religious teachers or founders of religions, and find that all those before Christianity, except the Jews, were humane in their treatment of heretics, or those who differed with them in belief. It remained for the worshippers of one God, one son and a ghost to butcher and burn every one who did not subscribe to their creed or cult.

The Jews did it by express command of God himself, see Numbers 31st chapter, and the story of bloody Joshua. The Christians did it, and for a thousand years the world was at the mercy of the hordes of sanctified anarchists.

Mahomet founded a belief in one God, and rivers of blood were shed in the propagation of it. Even today hundreds of "Christian dogs" are being butchered in the name of Allah.

The Greek Catholics in Russia are also busily engaged in an attempt to annihilate the descendants of the patriarchal fathers who gave them their graft and god.

The Mormons began it, and the fact that the many branches of Christian belief objected to having their chattels secretly murdered, alone put a quietus to the "Danites of the Sierras."

John Alexander Dowie would have slain the multitudes in Chicago and New York had he dared.

The ship of Zion has sailed through seas of blood since the day Cain slew his brother Able with a rotten carrot.

Gold has been the god of the priesthood since the time when Moses and Aaron, with true Jewish instinct, cornered that metal by having it all cast into one chunk, and then confiscating it to their own satisfaction and profit.

Luther's reformation was the beginning of the end of Christianity, and, as Col. Ingersoll said, "When the last cathedral is a ruin, and the last priest is a corpse, then will the world be free."

Man created God in his (man's) own image. The god of every nation is an exact counterpart of his creators. Hence god is no better than man, nor is mankind any better than its god.

History proves conclusively to every student, whether believer or unbeliever, that the creed of Christianity was edited from the creeds of antiquity, and "that all the reason we have Christianity today is because a dissolute and licentious Pagan Emperor fell in love with a Christian woman" and early perceived in Christianity a splendid means of govern-

ing mankind with safety, ease and immense profit to the state, as it taught its devotees to kiss the hand that smote them.

And now, gentle reader, don't condemn me as incurable until you have read the teachings of Buddha, Brahma, Confucius, Zoroaster and others; the beautiful Agnostic philosophy of our own Col. Ingersoll. Then read the Bible, Genesis 38; Exodus 31; the book of Joshua; story of Lot and his daughters; story of David and Bathsheba; second Samuel, chapter 11; also second Samuel, chapter 13; 6-15; and Solomon and his infamous glory. The questionable story of Jesus and Isaiah 36-12, one of the most loathsome paragraphs in print in the English language.

Then will you go out some night in the moonlight, beneath the stars, bare your head before the God of our youth and ask him how any woman can acknowledge or reverence the infamous myth, or God if you please, who inspired man to such deeds of moral degeneracy? Then after reading the above citations, decide for yourselves which is the purer, sweeter, nobler and more unselfish, the creed of the Christian or the Infidel's belief in the beautiful trinity of Liberty, Truth and Love.

I have less respect for the creed of the Christian than for those of the pagans and ancients. Christianity alone has a literal and horrible place of punishment for all those who dare have a mind of their own. It places a premium upon ignorance, credulity and superstition and makes even its God curse the goddess of Wisdom and through her all mankind for having learned good from evil.

The beautiful mythologies of the Greek and Roman, and the philosophies of Confucius and Zoroaster and the teachings of Buddha and Brahma appeal to me, for they are human and natural, while the religion of Christianity is unnatural superstition, taught to mislead the masses, and when in authority, Christianity was ever inhuman and horrible.

Now may the Goddess of Wisdom light your way and lead you from the darkness and night of superstition, into the bright realm of pure reason and to the foot of the throne of the true gods of Freethought—Liberty, Truth and Love.

Carbondale, Colorado.

(Continued from last column)

#### REASON.

and Christianity—synonymous terms, and this fact gives reason to rejoice, for the long, dark and gloomy past which was due to the ignorance fostered and preserved by the priesthood, has gone, and the light of reason is rapidly making this world a decent place in which to live. Man's highest faculty is now revealing its power as never before, and those who use it find no attraction inside a church that deals with imaginary hells and heavens; but all such go direct to Nature and study her and her laws, so as to know how to live and to get the most out of this life: which, as far as known is the only one we are liable to see. So let us for an imaginary hereafter, as all not neglect and despise this world priests would have us do, but so live as to get all the pleasure and happiness there is coming to us, which, if you have been a close observer is just about what Mr. Priest has always done, for he knows the good things of this life and generally gets them.

When the masses know enough to live as the priest does, not as he tells them, they will be so anxious themselves to live on the fat of the land and have good comfortable homes, they will have no time or inclination to longer support those parasites in ease and luxury; and that one thing alone would destroy priestcraft and put those fakirs out of business, for stopping their source of living is the only way to do it. One of these sky-pilots has recently revealed the fact that the supply of Protestant preachers has fallen off nineteen and one half per cent in the United States in the last twelve years.

If this is not good news then I do not know it when I see it, and it is continual cause for rejoicing; so the fact is passed along that others may feel its cheerful influence. But there is still need for Freethought papers to push the world along, so let us stand by them and do our best to keep as many agoing as possible, for we cannot have too many.

Is your name on the Blade muster roll?

Now is the accepted time to arise, hump yourself and do something to keep the Blade's head up.

## REASON

### FOR GREAT REJOICING

#### Has the Freethinker When He Looks at Christianity's Slow Progress

(By Channing Severance).

When the Freethinker looks at the religious question from the standpoint of general progress, he has good reason to rejoice, for although priests and preachers are still about as numerous as fleas on a dog, they do not come quite so near running the world as they used to.

The power of thought since it found expression in free speech, has been rapidly dispelling the errors of the past as seen in slavery to religious superstition; and humanity has accented higher and faster in the intellectual scale in the last forty years than at any one time since the dawn of history.

It is true restraining influences are yet strong and priests and preachers hate progress as bad as ever, but with the power broken they once exercised, the world moves rapidly on, and science, philosophy and reason light the way. Religious paralysis of the mind is much less common than it used to be, and nearly everybody is reading, and consequently thinking, in this country at least; and if the printing press continues to roll out and throw broadcast such tremendous quantities of literature, embodying ideas of every kind and character, the forward movement of the world is bound to continue and show increase in speed.

We have been tied to the dead past long enough, and modern invention are so numerous and so wonderful the future with its marvelous possibilities is causing untold numbers to turn around and look forward for a change. Reading the Bible to find out what some old fossil said and thought about God and a place to migrate to after death, is not a popular pastime with the rising generation; and Christ and him crucified is a story so stale it is producing intellectual nausea in people who are really mentally awake. Live people want live ideas, and action is preferred to living with the dead mentally, two thousand years ago when Jesus rode an ass into Jerusalem, and had no more idea of steam railroads, electric railways, automobiles and air ships as a means of rapid transit than he had of the shape of the earth and its relation to the rest of the universe. He was satisfied with his "mount," for the ass was as speedy as the times in which he lived, and for people who passed their time thinking and talking about death and the next world, the ass surely was good enough. But he isn't now; neither are the ways, customs and thoughts than then prevailed, for this age of the world. We want something else; and we are going to keep on wanting the new and novel, although we are now as far ahead of those troglodyte ancestors, who, probably with fear and ignorance, produced a religion, which in varied forms has cursed humanity from that period of time to this. The man who does his own thinking and does not look at the past through the eyes of a priest, knows we have nothing to learn from those times and those people that is of any practical benefit, and the two thousand years we have been tied to them by the power of the priesthood and the force of sickly sentiment, has so demoralized over and over again. They lived their lives at that time and no doubt did the best they could under prevailing conditions, but why future generations should be forever

tied to them, and their stupid views of life and its problems, is something no sane or sensible man can find out. The preachers profess to think those were ideal times and conditions, when Jesus was tramping around the country and talking nonsense to numskulls who comprised the majority of the residents in the so-called holy land, many of them not knowing their right hand from their left, but if the world were to take the backward steps necessary to return to those dull and dark days, when mental forces were slow and lifeless, and all the modern inventions and discoveries that contribute to humanity's welfare and comfort, were sleeping in undeveloped brains, they would dislike the change as well as the rest of us, for they have become accustomed to their present environments and from choice would prefer an automobile to the long-eared and poky ass of Bible times. When men walked and talked with God as the records assert, Jordan was indeed a rocky road to travel, and this world was of very little account compared with the next one which was seen so clearly with the eye of faith that their principle purpose in life was to make sure of getting into it. Those times will do to talk about when playing on sentiment and emotion, for the past has a great attraction for people who think they are spiritual minded and that was a spiritual age, but no one with sense enough to see the superiority of the present wants to go back to primitive times when human beings lived like cattle and groped in darkness and ignorance that to us now would be appalling. But why are we so far ahead of those people to-day? Simply because we have devoted time and attention to this world, and got rid of religious restrictions that made rational thinking displeasing to the priests God. The power of thought has produced the great change, for people who do not think can no more progress and rise in the scale of life than the ass of antiquity, who is right where he was in every respect when Balaam beat him on the back and his mission in life was to be a beast of burden. The ass is typical of human beings whose brains are paralyzed with religion, for intellectually they are co-equal, and the masters of both see they are well supplied with burdens that they may fulfill their missions as God intended.

Every time I see an ass—they call them burros in the western mining camps—so loaded down that only their ears are visible, I always think of religious slaves and workers doing the will of the priest, and the same respect is felt for one as the other.

But as previously remarked, these human asses are not as numerous as formerly and the priest is losing his grip surely and steadily as education, which is now a crime mostly in Spain and Russia, reaches the masses and their thinkers begin to work. It is a great thing to think, for it is the basis of all power and every privilege that mortal man monopolizes, and that is why the priest wants to do it all for the dear people, and ever has since he first assumed the right and claimed that God gave it to him and his species.

Let us never forget the remark those enemies of Freethought and free speech made when the printing press was invented—there was no such thing you know when their power was omnipotent—"we must destroy it or it will destroy us."

In this case they came pretty near being able to read the future, for the printing press has put them on the run and they are now fighting for existence instead of domineering the whole world of Christendom as they once did. In every direction we behold the decay of priestcraft and (Continued in column 4)